

LESSON 1

Three Keys to Passenger Safety: Safety Belts, Booster Seats, Back Seat

Student Learning Objectives:	National Health Education Standards:
1. Identify safe and unsafe passenger behaviors.	• Self Management
2. Describe how booster seats and safety belts help passengers to stay safe.	• Core Concepts
3. Describe why the back seat is the safest place for young people to ride in a vehicle.	• Core Concepts

Lesson Synopsis

Introduce this health unit on safety. Explain why it is important to be a safe passenger. Identify safe and unsafe passenger behaviors. Describe the safety belt laws. Describe how child safety seats, booster seats, and safety belts help passengers to stay safe. Explain that air bags are life-saving safety features, but that the back seat is the safest place for children 12 years of age or under. Have students create and present skits or rhymes about vehicle safety. Summarize by reviewing key safe and unsafe behaviors.



Activity	Time in Minutes	Materials Needed
Introduction	1	• None
Teacher Input	12	Health Education Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster: "Passenger Safety: It's the Law!" Michigan Model for Health Clearinghouse Teacher Manual Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Reference: "Vehicle Safety" Supplied by the Teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yardstick or other measuring device (Extension Activity)
Application or Skill Practice	16	Teacher Manual Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Master: "Passenger Safety Rules" • Teacher Reference—Assessment: "Assessment Rubric for Skill Development: Safety Rhymes and Skits" Supplied by the Teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils or pens • Writing paper • Hat or similar container
Closure	1	Teacher Manual Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Resource Sheet: "What to Know Before You Go" • Teacher Reference: "Sample Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lesson" Supplied by the Teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3" by 5" index cards, one per student (Extension Activity) • Crayons or markers (Extension Activity)
TOTAL	30	

Preparation

Prior to the Lesson:

- **Decide if you want to assess** student skill development. A rubric, "Assessment Rubric for Skill Development: Safety Rhymes and Skits," is provided for you to use at the end of this lesson.
- **Check the safety belt laws** for your state if you are using the *Michigan Model™* in a state other than Michigan. **Modify the lesson** as needed to reflect your state's laws.
- **Review** the teacher reference, "Sample Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lessons," and **decide when to send it home** with students. It should be sent one or two weeks before teaching the personal safety lesson, Lesson 4 in this unit. It will allow parents the opportunity to preview the materials if they desire. **Modify the letter if you wish and duplicate** it so that each student will have a copy to take home.

For Teacher Input:

- **Read** the teacher reference, "Vehicle Safety."
- **Display the poster**, "Passenger Safety: It's the Law!"

For Application or Skill Practice:

- **Decide how you will divide your class** into six groups.
- **Duplicate** the teacher master, "Passenger Safety Rules," and cut the rules apart to provide each small group with one rule.


For Closure:

- **Duplicate** the family resource sheet, "What to Know Before You Go," for students to take home.

LESSON PROCEDURE

Introduction: Introduce this unit on safety. Identify why it is important to be a safe passenger.


Approximately 1 minute



Instructional Steps	Script & Detailed Directions	Extensions & Suggestions
Introduce the safety unit.	<i>To feel good, we need to take care of our health. Part of staying healthy involves doing things that help keep us safe every day. In this new series of health lessons, we will talk about safety.</i>	
Recognize that everyone spends time as a passenger in a vehicle.	<p>You will be asking students to signal their response to several statements. Pause between each statement to allow students to raise their hands.</p> <p><i>Raise your hand if you ride in a car or truck when you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>go to or from school.</i> • <i>go to play sports.</i> • <i>go shopping.</i> • <i>go to a friend's house.</i> • <i>take part in other activities.</i> 	 <p>You can add movement to the lesson by having students signal with different body movements, such as reaching for the ceiling, touching toes, running in place, and so on.</p>

	<p><i>We all spend time riding in cars and trucks. It's important that we know how to be safe passengers. Why do you think it is important to be a safe passenger?</i></p> <p>Answer: If we are safe passengers, we can help avoid crashes and help keep ourselves safe if a crash does happen.</p>	
State the focus of the lesson.	<p><i>Today we are going to learn how to be safe passengers. We're also going to learn how safety belts, booster seats, and riding in the back seat help keep us safe.</i></p>	

Teacher Input: Identify safe and unsafe passenger behaviors. Explain how child safety seats, booster seats, safety belts, and riding in the back seat help keep passengers safe.




Approximately 12 minutes

Instructional Steps	Script & Detailed Directions	Extensions & Suggestions
Identify safe and unsafe passenger behaviors.	<p><i>Even though you're not old enough to drive, you play an important role in making a car or truck ride safe. Raise your hand if you can think of one safety rule for riding in a vehicle.</i></p> <p>Answers: Guide students to include the following ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a safety belt and stay seated. • Sit in a booster seat if under 8 years of age, unless 4'9" tall. • Use a child safety seat for young children. • Ride in the back seat. • Keep all objects and body parts inside. • Be quiet and don't distract the driver. • Don't throw things. • Keep doors locked. <p>Record answers on the board.</p> <p><i>What unsafe behaviors should you avoid while riding in a car?</i></p> <p>Answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never ride without wearing a safety belt. • Never ride without a booster seat if needed. • Never move around in the vehicle. • Never wave your hands, legs, or toys out of the window. • Never be loud or do other things that would distract the driver. 	
Explain the safety belt laws, using the poster, "Passenger Safety: It's the Law!"	<p><i>If you know the very first thing you should do to stay safe when you get into a vehicle, pretend like you're doing it now.</i></p> <p>Answer: Buckle your safety belt.</p> <p>Display the poster.</p>	 <p>If you are teaching this lesson outside Michigan, check the laws of your state and modify the lesson if needed.</p>

	<p><i>In Michigan, the law says:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children from birth until the age of 8 must be in an approved child safety seat or booster seat in the front and rear seats, unless they are 4'9" tall. • You must wear a safety belt from the age of 8 or 4'9" tall until you turn 16, whether you sit in the front or back seat. • All people of all ages must wear a safety belt when sitting in the front seat. • The only people who may choose whether or not to wear safety belts are people over age 16 who are sitting in the back seat. <p><i>Safety belts don't work right until a person's body reaches a certain size—usually at least 4'9" tall. Booster seats make the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts fit properly, and they protect a child's stomach, chest, and neck from being hurt in an accident.</i></p> <p><i>What does the law require people your age to do every time they ride in a car or truck, no matter where they sit?</i></p> <p>Answer: Buckle their safety belt.</p> <p><i>Why do you think we have these laws?</i></p> <p>Answer: to keep us safe</p> <p><i>People get hurt or killed more often if they are in a crash without their safety belts buckled. Wearing a safety belt can save your life.</i></p>	 <p>This would be a good time to discuss what children can do if no safety belt is available. The child may request to ride in a different vehicle or not go. It is illegal to transport children under the age of 16 without a safety belt or car seat. If families do not have a vehicle with a safety belt, this can be a sensitive topic.</p>  <p>Have students measure one another's heights and create a bar graph depicting the differing heights.</p>
<p>Describe how booster seats and safety belts help passengers to stay safe.</p>	<p><i>What is the number one reason to use booster seats and safety belts?</i></p> <p>Answer: They can save your life.</p> <p><i>In a crash, drivers and passengers who are not wearing safety belts will crash against the inside of the vehicle, another passenger, or something outside the vehicle, such as a tree or the road. This impact can kill or seriously injure a person.</i></p> <p><i>Safety belts make a person's body stop more slowly in a crash. The belt absorbs some of the impact.</i></p> <p><i>Safety belts also spread the force of the crash across the stronger hip and chest bones rather than the part of the body that hits something first, which is often the head.</i></p> <p><i>Remember to use a booster seat if you need to so that the safety belt will fit properly.</i></p>	


Application or Skill Practice: In groups, make up skits or rhymes about vehicle safety, then share with the class.




Approximately 16 minutes

Instructional Steps	Script & Detailed Directions	Extensions & Suggestions
<p>Form six small groups and create skits or rhymes about passenger safety rules. Use the teacher master, "Passenger Safety Rules."</p>  <p>Have groups present their skits or rhymes.</p>	<p>Assign a leader and a recorder for each group.</p> <p>Have the leaders draw a passenger safety rule out of a hat or similar container. Give paper and pencils or pens to the recorders.</p> <p><i>Working with your group, make up a short skit or rhyme about your safety rule. Your skit or rhyme should encourage others to be safe passengers. You will have ten minutes to work.</i></p> <p>After 10 minutes, have each group state their safety rule and then share their skit or rhyme with the class.</p>	 <p>Use the rubric provided at the end of the lesson if you want to assess students' skill development.</p> 

Closure: Summarize safe and unsafe passenger behaviors.

Approximately 1 minute

Instructional Steps	Script & Detailed Directions	Extensions & Suggestions
<p>Review unsafe and safe passenger behaviors.</p>	<p><i>What are the two most important safety rules to follow when you ride in a vehicle?</i></p> <p>Answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckle your safety belt and use a booster seat if you need to. • Sit in the back seat. <p><i>We also learned about some things we should NOT do in a vehicle. Raise your hand if you can think of something.</i></p> <p>Answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never ride without wearing a safety belt. • Never ride without a booster seat if needed. • Never move around in the vehicle. • Never wave your hands, legs, or toys out of the window. • Never be loud or do other things that would distract the driver. <p><i>If you plan to wear your safety belt whenever you ride in a car, cross your arms over your chest.</i></p> <p><i>If you plan to always sit in the back seat, cross your arms behind your back.</i></p> <p><i>Good for you!</i></p>	 <p>Have students make safety reminder cards. Distribute one 3" by 5" index card and crayons or markers to each student. On the card, have students draw a picture or write a safety rule that will remind everyone in the car to buckle up for safety. Have students take the card home to post in the family car.</p>

<p>Distribute the family resource sheet, "What to Know Before You Go."</p> 	<p><i>Be sure to talk to your families about what you learned today. This sheet will help you.</i></p>	 <p>Modify the teacher reference, "Sample Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lessons," if you wish and send it home one or two weeks prior to teaching Lesson 4 in this unit.</p> 
<p>State the focus of the next health lesson.</p>	<p><i>In our next health lesson, we will practice the right way to wear a safety belt. We will also learn how our decisions about vehicle safety affect other people.</i></p>	





Vehicle Safety

Children are more vulnerable in car crashes because of their developing bone structure and the size and shape of their bodies. This lesson teaches students vehicle safety rules and the importance of wearing safety belts, using child safety seats and booster seats, and riding in the back seat.

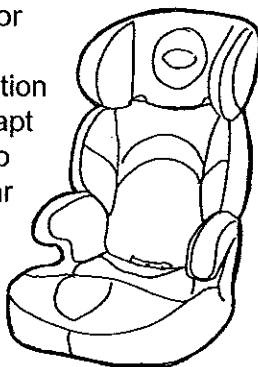
Deadly Facts

Traffic accidents are the number one killer of people between the ages of 2 and 34. In 2007, there were 1,670 passenger vehicle deaths of children from birth through age 14. Of these children, 45% were unrestrained.

Child Restraint Systems

Child restraint systems come in several forms:

- Child safety seats are usually for infants up to 20 pounds.
- Convertible seats and combination seats are often designed to adapt from infants through children up to 40 pounds. They may be rear facing or forward facing.
- Booster seats are designed for children under 8 years old unless they are 4'9" tall.

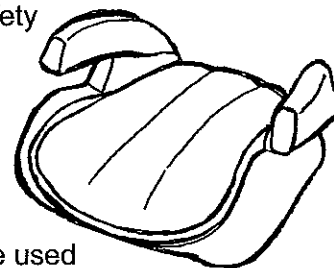


The best child restraint system is the one that fits the child properly, is easy to use, and fits in the vehicle correctly. For more information on booster and child safety seats and their proper installation, visit these sites:

- Visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) at www.nhtsa.gov. Look at the articles under "Child Passenger Safety."
- Visit www.fitforakid.org for information on Chrysler's free child safety seat inspection program, "Fit for a Kid."

Child Safety Seats

Research shows that when child safety seats are used correctly, fatalities among children less than 5 years old decrease by 71 percent. Unfortunately, many safety seats are not installed properly.



Booster Seats

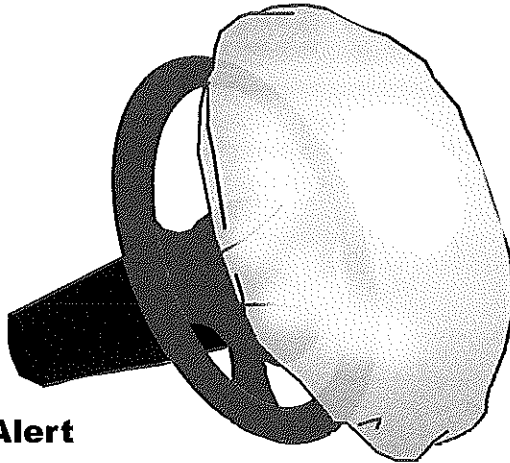
Booster seats should be used when a child is too big for a child safety seat, but is shorter than 4'9". An adult safety belt does not properly fit a child who is under 4'9" tall. In a crash, an improperly fitted safety belt can be deadly. Booster seats make a vehicle's lap and shoulder belts fit properly, and they protect a child's stomach, chest, and neck in a crash. Booster seats also allow a child's legs to bend normally.

For more information on booster seats, visit AAA at www.aaa.com and read the article "Safety Seats and Older Kids."

Michigan's Safety Belt Laws

In Michigan, the laws regarding child passengers and safety belt use are as follows:

- **From birth until 8 years old:** Children must be properly restrained in an approved child safety seat or booster seat unless 4'9" tall in either the front or rear seat.
- **From age 8 or 4'9" tall until age 16:** Children must wear a safety belt whether sitting in the front or rear seat.
- **All people of all ages:** When sitting in the front seat, everyone must wear a safety belt.

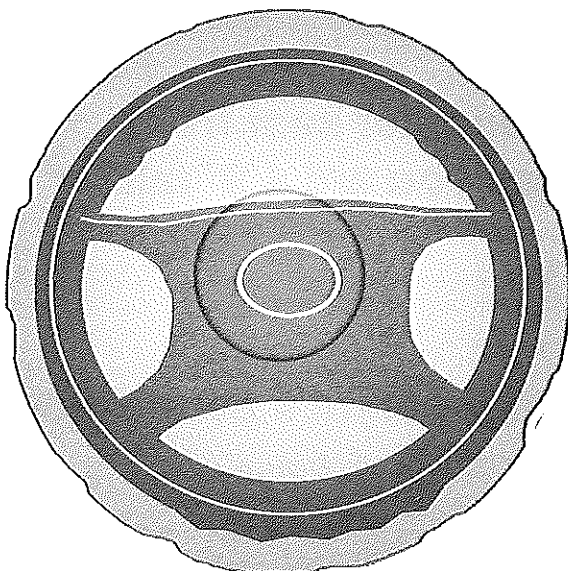


Air Bag Alert

The Facts:

Air bags are designed for frontal impact crashes—the kind that account for more than half of all passenger vehicle occupant deaths. The bags are designed to limit head and chest injuries. Air bags have reduced the risk of death in a frontal collision by 30 percent. As of January 2003, air bags had saved more than 10,271 lives.

However, they can pose a threat to young children. In order to do its job, an air bag comes out of the dashboard as fast as 200 miles per hour—a force that can hurt those who are sitting too close to it, especially children. The NHTSA reports that air bags can be fatal when children ride in the front seat, especially if they are improperly wearing safety belts.



Air Bag Safety Tips:

- Infants should *never* be placed in a rear-facing safety seat in the front seat—the seat rides too close to the deploying air bag.
- Children age 12 and under should *always* be seated in the back seat. Children riding in the front seat are at deadly risk if they are improperly belted, completely unbelted, out of position, or too small for the safety belts to fit correctly. In a crash, they can easily slide forward and be struck in the head or neck by the inflating air bag.
- The safest way for all children to ride is buckled up in age- and size-appropriate safety seats in the back seat. Children are up to 29 percent safer riding in the back seat versus the front seat, whether the vehicle has an air bag or not.
- If a child must ride in a pickup truck with no back seat, the seat should be moved as far back as possible and the air bag should be turned off. If there is no back seat and no way to turn off the air bag, a rear-facing infant safety seat should *never* be used.
- Drivers and all adult passengers, particularly people under 5'5" tall, should be properly belted, and front seats should be moved back as far as possible.

To learn more about air bag safety, visit the NHTSA at www.nhtsa.gov. You can also call NHTSA's toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236.

For more information on air bags, seat belt safety, and Michigan driver and passenger laws, go to the Office of Highway Safety Planning at www.michigan.gov/ohsp.

For laws in other states, start your search at the home page of the state's governmental website.



Passenger Safety Rules



Buckle your safety belt.

Ride in the back seat.

Don't distract the driver.

Never wave your hands, legs, or toys out of the window.

Use a child safety seat or booster seat from birth until 8 years old unless you are 4'9" tall.

Don't ride with anyone without your parent's permission.



Sample Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lessons

[ON SCHOOL LETTERHEAD]

[DATE]

Dear Parent:

Our school is using a health program called the *Michigan Model for Health™*. It gives families and schools opportunities to work as a team to help youth stay healthy.

The program includes a lesson on personal safety. The lesson teaches students how to protect themselves from inappropriate touch. Sadly, sexual abuse of children takes place more often than we think. We need to work together to stop this problem.

Children need to know the possible dangers and the rules for staying as safe as possible. The lessons in the *Michigan Model™* present material on the children's level. The skills are taught in a safe and simple way. Through these lessons, students will learn:

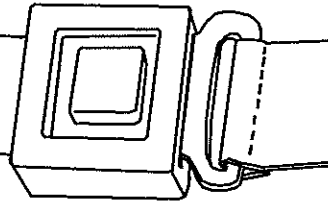
- How to judge between safe and unsafe touch
- How to protect themselves
- Who to go to for help

We will be teaching the personal safety lessons in the next few weeks. If you wish to look over the materials used in these lessons, please contact the school at [phone number].

Sincerely,

[Principal's Name]

What to Know Before You Go



Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 3 to 6 and 8 to 14 years old.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2007

Children are easily injured in car crashes for two reasons:

- Their bones are developing.
- The size and shape of their bodies make injuries more likely.

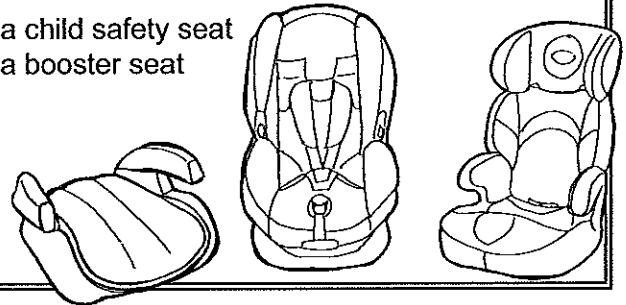
Your child is learning how to be safe while riding in a car or truck. There are two important things to remember:

- Use a safety belt and be sure it fits right. Safety belts save thousands of lives each year.
- Sit in the back seat.

Safety Belts for Everyone!

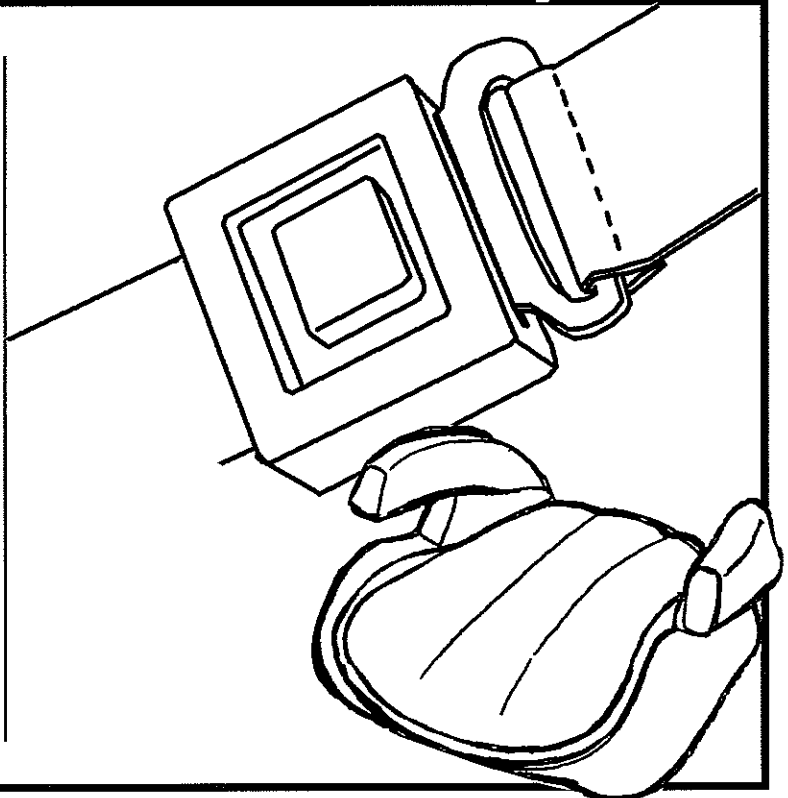
People over 4'9" tall can use the safety belts as they are installed in cars and trucks. For other children, use:

- a child safety seat
- a booster seat



What's Better: A Booster Seat or Safety Belt?

Until children are 4'9" tall they are required by law to use booster seats. An adult safety belt does not properly fit a child under 4'9" tall. In a crash, a safety belt that doesn't fit right can be deadly. Booster seats make the lap and shoulder belts fit properly. The belts protect a child's stomach, chest, and neck in a crash. Booster seats also allow a child's legs to bend normally.



How Should a Safety Belt Fit?



- The seatback in the vehicle should be upright.
- NEVER let your child wear a shoulder belt behind his or her back or under the arm. In a crash, it could cause injuries, break ribs, or make your child's head and chest strike something.
- Never let your child wear a shoulder belt without a lap belt; they must both be fastened.
- Keep the shoulder belt snug and away from the neck and face. If the shoulder belt crosses your child's face or throat, use a booster seat or move your child to a seat that has only a lap belt. Sometimes moving the seat forward or backward adjusts where the safety belt rests.
- When using only a lap belt, it should be snug and buckled low on your child's hips. Keep it off the stomach.



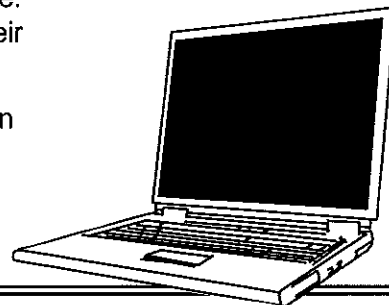
Sometimes, your child may have trouble locating a safety belt if it is stuck or lost in the seat. Take the time to make sure your child is buckled up before you start the car, and help if necessary.

More than half of the children killed in car accidents are not wearing any type of safety belt. Don't let your child become a statistic!

Need More Information?

The best child restraint system is the one that fits the child properly, is easy to use, and fits in the vehicle correctly. For more information on booster and child safety seats, visit these websites:

- Visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: www.nhtsa.gov.
 - Look at the articles under "Child Passenger Safety."
- Read your vehicle owner's manual and the booster seat instructions to learn how to install booster seats.
- Participating Chrysler dealerships inspect child safety seats for free. It doesn't matter what make or model of car. For information on their program, "Fit for a Kid," visit www.fitforakid.org.
- Read the article "Safety Seats and Older Kids" for more information on booster seats. It is on the American Automobile Association website: www.aaa.com.





Assessment Rubric for Skill Development: Safety Rhymes and Skits

The following rubric can be used for assessing student skill development. The student has demonstrated the following elements of this skill through role play, written assignments, or classroom activities.

Elements in the Lesson

The skit or rhyme must address one of the following elements:

- Buckle your safety belt.
- Ride in the back seat.
- Don't distract the driver.
- Never wave your hands, legs, or toys out of a window.
- Use a child safety seat or booster seat from birth until 8 years old unless you are 4'9" tall.
- Don't ride with anyone without your parent's permission.

1	2	3	4	Comments
The skit or rhyme is vague, unclear, or lacks encouragement of others to be safe passengers. It may not be related to the assigned passenger safety rule.	The skit or rhyme has some clarity, but is not convincing regarding the assigned passenger safety rule.	The skit or rhyme addresses the assigned passenger safety rule clearly and encourages others to be safe passengers.	The skit or rhyme clearly addresses the assigned passenger safety rule with depth of understanding and strongly encourages others to be safe passengers.	